



UPPER YAMPA WATER  
CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

**2020-2021**  
ANNUAL REPORT

# A Letter

## FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER

Welcome to the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District's inaugural Annual Report! Traditionally, annual reports provide the opportunity to reflect on the challenges, collective efforts, and successes of the past year. As this is the UYWCD's first consideration of our collective experiences in the form of an annual report, I want to take the opportunity to recognize the 55 years of hard work and dedication by the UYWCD staff, board members, and partners that brought us to where we are now as an organization.

When the Routt County District Court Magistrate signed the Petition for the Organization of the UYWCD on March 8, 1966, a chain of events was set in motion that would ultimately produce the water supply facilities and organizational resources the UYWCD now wields in the pursuit of responsibly conserving, protecting, developing, providing, and enhancing the water resources of the Yampa River Basin. Without these 55 years of efforts, the UYWCD would be hard pressed to deliver solutions to the growing challenges of modern water resource management.

The past two years have presented some unprecedented challenges for the District, the Yampa River Basin, the state, and the world as a whole. However, the challenges we faced in 2020-2021 and will continue to face in the future are shared challenges. Together, UYWCD and its partners, friends and constituents are making great strides to collaboratively address our challenges and develop multi-benefit solutions that meet our growing needs.

As UYWCD's General Manager, I want to thank all our partners who have collectively contributed to our achievements over the past 55 years. I also invite you to learn more about our organization and share in our successes. This annual report highlights some of the accomplishments of 2020-2021, including continuous capital improvements, increased community outreach, and innovative water storage contracting unlike any the District or the state of Colorado has seen before. UYWCD looks forward to nurturing existing partnerships and developing new ones that help us ask the questions that will form the basis of collective continued achievements.

I hope you enjoy this annual report as the first record of at least another 55 years of the UYWCD. As always, please feel free to visit our website at [www.upperyampawater.com](http://www.upperyampawater.com) or contact the UYWCD staff for additional information.

Many thanks,



Andy Rossi  
General Manager  
Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District





Image: Yamcolo Reservoir

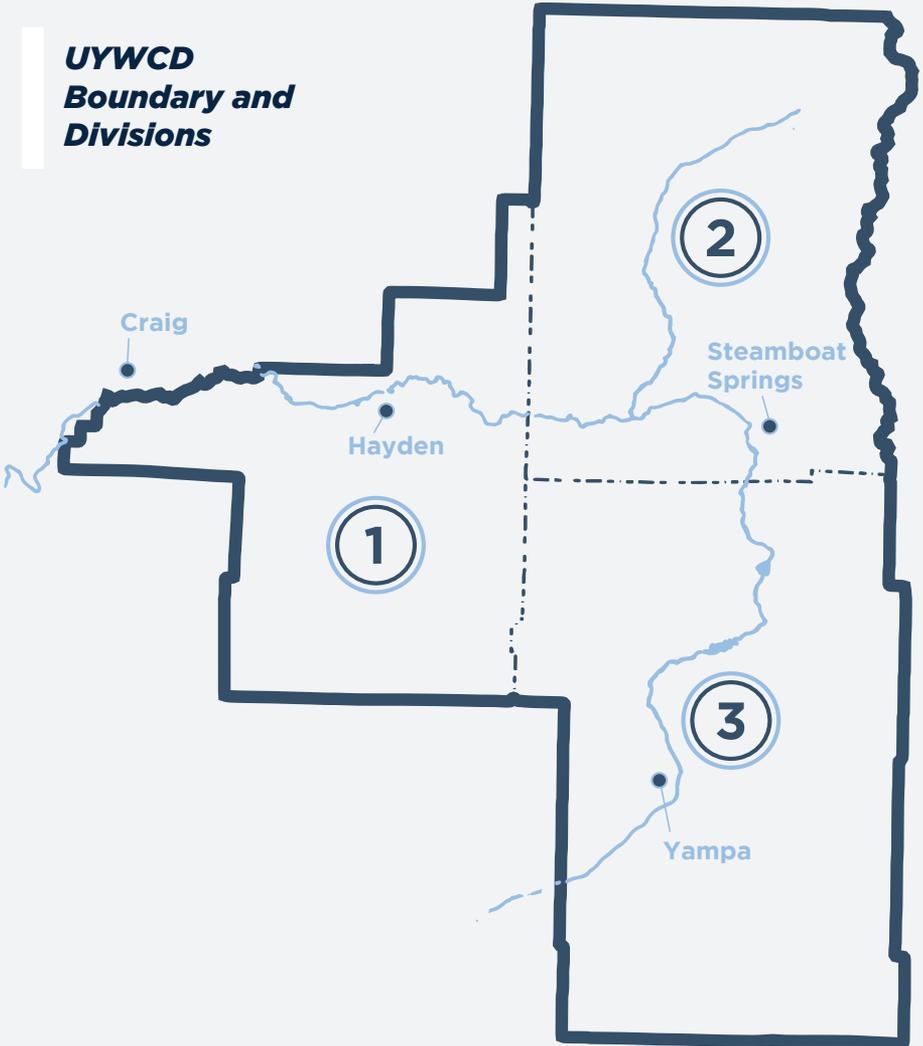
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# Staff and Directors

The Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District is governed by a board of nine directors. The nine member Board of Directors is comprised of three representatives from the three divisions within the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District boundary. Directors are appointed by the District Judge to serve staggered four-year terms and establish policy and strategic direction for the District.

## ***UYWCD Boundary and Divisions***



# Directors

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:  
DOUG MONGER, NICOLE  
SELTZER, KEN BRENNER,  
LYN HALLIDAY, WEBSTER  
JONES, JIM HASKINS,  
JOHN REDMOND, RON MURPHY  
(NOT PICTURED: TOM SHARP)



## Division

**1** **Doug Monger**  
*Vice President*  
**Jim Haskins**  
**Ron Murphy**

**2** **Ken Brenner**  
*President*  
**Webster Jones**  
**Tom Sharp**

**3** **Lyn Halliday**  
**John Redmond**  
**Nicole Seltzer**

# Staff

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:  
NEAL OBRAY, ANDY ROSSI,  
HOLLY KIRKPATRICK,  
DEB BASTIAN, KARINA CRAIG,  
EMILY LOWELL, EDDIE ROGERS  
(NOT PICTURED: JOHN NELSON)



**Andy Rossi**  
*General Manager*

**Emily Lowell**  
*District Engineer*

**Deb Bastian**  
*Business Manager*

**Karina Craig**  
*Chief Accountant*

**Holly Kirkpatrick**  
*Public Information and  
External Affairs Manager*

**John Nelson**  
*Part-Time Facilities  
Operator*

**Neal Obray**  
*Facilities and  
Hydroelectric Power  
Plant Operator*

**Eddie Rogers**  
*Facilities and  
Hydroelectric Power  
Plant Operator*

# Mission and Vision



## our mission

**To lead water resource management within the District's boundaries by responsibly conserving, protecting, developing, providing and enhancing the water resources of the Upper Yampa River Basin for the benefit of the Basin.**

## our vision

**An Upper Yampa River Basin with safe, secure water storage and supply for its customers that benefits all uses in the Basin.**

*Image: Stillwater Ditch*

The District's mission and goals are informed by the legislative declaration of the Colorado Water Conservancy Act (the "Act") under which the District was created, in Colo. Rev. Stat. Ann. §37-45-102, as well as relevant recent federal and state mandates, statutes, policies, and regulations.

# Strategic Plan

## The UYWCD Board of Directors adopted its first Strategic Plan on January 15, 2020.

The Strategic Plan will be regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate by the Board of Directors. As such, it should be considered a living document.

OUR STATEMENTS AND GOALS ARE NOT LISTED IN ORDER OF PRIORITY.

## Policy Statements

The District will be financially sustainable and able to meet its stated goals.

The District relies on healthy functioning reservoirs, rivers, and streams in the Upper Yampa Basin for its agricultural, environmental, municipal, commercial, industrial, domestic and recreational cultures, and thus, its economic future.

The District is committed to serving the public in agricultural, municipal, commercial, domestic and industrial uses, and identifying opportunities to support water-based environmental and recreational values.

Climate change will be considered in planning.

The District is committed to maintaining the structural and functional integrity and protecting the water rights of the District's Yamcolo and Stagecoach reservoirs.

Collaboration in watershed management is important to advancing the District's mission.

The District recognizes the critical economic, socio-cultural values, aesthetic, and environmental contributions that ranching and agriculture provide to the Basin.

Direct flow and storage water requirements of prudent industrial uses, such as energy development and production, will be considered in planning for the economic welfare of the District.

The District recognizes the importance of a long-term municipal water supply in creating a vibrant, diverse, and resilient local economy.

The District recognizes that water-based outdoor recreational activities are critical to a thriving and resilient local economy.

The District's ability to manage and develop water resources within its boundaries are crucial to safeguarding the Basin's water supply and depend largely upon local land use policies and practices.

The District recognizes the importance of science-based water quality programs in maintaining the chemical, physical, biological, and aesthetic integrity of the Basin's reservoirs, rivers, and streams.

The District will participate in local and statewide deliberative processes to address climate, environmental, agricultural, social, political, legal, and economic challenges as they affect water resources.

The District opposes any new transfers of stream flow or storage water from the Upper Yampa River Basin and its tributaries to other basins.

The District will evaluate future water works that may be important to the District's long-term success.

As a taxpayer-supported public entity, the District will promote a two-way exchange of ideas and information with our community and constituents regarding the District's programs and priorities.

# District Goals

## Goal 1:

Protect Upper Yampa Basin water resources and local water uses from trans-basin diversions and Colorado River administration that would adversely impact those uses.

## Goal 2:

Ensure the District's infrastructure is safe, maintained, and improved to serve the needs of the District.

## Goal 3:

Ensure the District is financially sustainable and able to meet its stated goals.

## Goal 4:

Protect all in-Basin beneficial vested water uses in the District, consistent with the policy statements above.

## Goal 5:

Represent Upper Yampa Basin water interests at the local, regional and statewide levels on relevant policy, legislative, administrative, regulatory, and judicial matters.

## Goal 6:

Provide adequate water supplies within the District in light of changing climate conditions, population shifts, and other changes.

## Goal 7:

Promote healthy reservoirs, streams, and watersheds within the District in support of the policy statements above.

## Goal 8:

Increase public understanding of water issues in the Upper Yampa Basin and the District's role in addressing them.

## Goal 9:

Maintain a robust water rights portfolio for the District.

## Goal 10:

Ensure robust staff, legal, and administrative resources to enhance District's viability and capacity to effectively serve its constituents.

**These goals represent the District's vision for the future, consistent with our policy statements. They supplement evolving regulatory compliance activities that form the core of the District's work.**

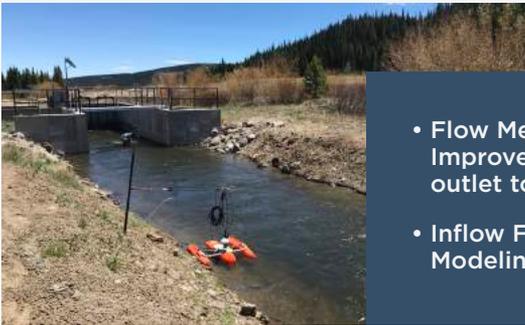
# Capital Projects

The ongoing facilities projects at UYWCD continue to contribute to the organization's operational effectiveness by improving the overall efficiency, functionality, safety, and cleanliness of the facilities. Projects are prioritized to improve and extend the operational lifespan of UYWCD infrastructure.



## Stagecoach Reservoir

- Control Systems Operating System Upgrade
- Intake Gate Stem Guide Repair
- Turbine Inspection
- Safety Buoy Improvements
- Willow Planting/ Bank Erosion Control Project
- Inflow Forecasting



## Yamcolo Reservoir

- Flow Measurement Improvements at outlet to Bear River
- Inflow Forecast Modeling
- Outlet Drain Repair and Seepage Monitoring Improvements
- Riprap Replacement



## Stillwater Ditch

- Flow Measurement Improvements
- Flow Control Structure Replacement

# Community Outreach

UYWCD is committed to assisting its communities and partners through funding and sponsorship opportunities, participation in work groups focused on addressing local water issues, and providing educational opportunities for community members and leaders at local, regional, and statewide levels.

During this unprecedented time of limited gatherings, virtual meetings, and alarming climate events, the UYWCD launched a new grant program, led field trips for local schools both virtually and in-person, and hosted a legislative drought tour reception to welcome representatives from around the state to the Yampa River Basin to discuss challenges during extreme drought conditions.



# 2020-2021 Community Grant Funding

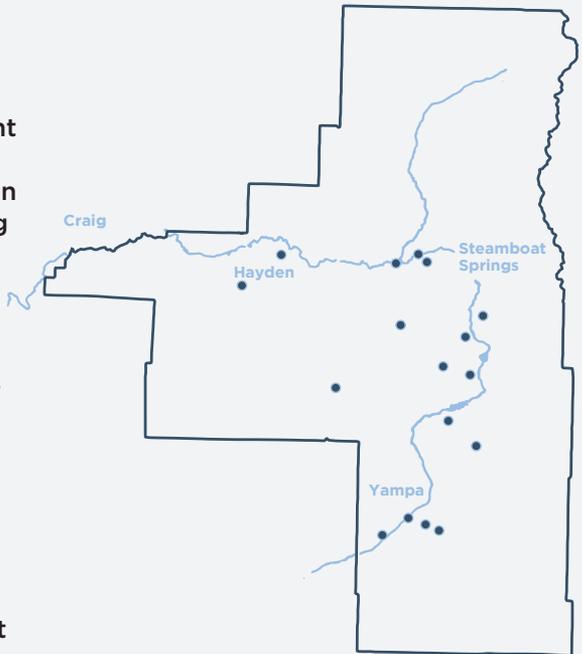
UYWCD provided over \$65,000 in funding for projects that address issues surrounding water management, water quality, water education, and river restoration.

PROJECT	AMOUNT APPROVED
Yampatika K-12 Water Education Program	\$10,000.00
Stagecoach Reservoir Mixing Zone Study	\$15,828.21
Yampa River/Walton Creek Confluence Restoration Project	\$5,000.00
Intergrated Water Management Plan (IWMP)	\$20,000.00
Upper Yampa Watershed Water Quality Project	\$15,000.00
<b>Total Disbursed:</b>	<b>\$65,828.21</b>

## Diversion Infrastructure Improvement Project

In 2020, we launched a grant program offering financial assistance for the installation of headgates and measuring devices. UYWCD partnered with the Yampa/White/Green Basin Roundtable to offer a grant application process that would assist as many diverters as possible.

The Diversion Infrastructure Improvement Project has provided over \$50,000 in funding to assist with the installation of headgates or measuring devices in almost 30 locations in the Upper Yampa River Basin.

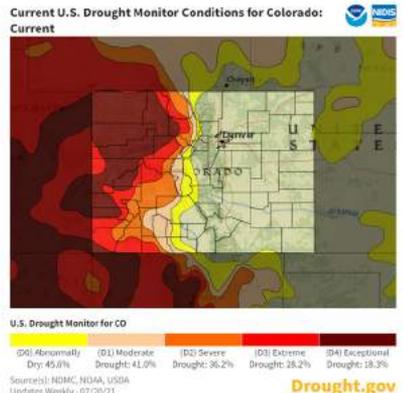
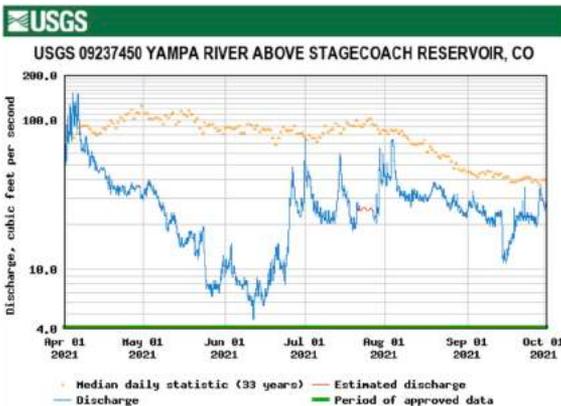


# Water Report

2020-2021 presented the Yampa River Basin with extreme drought conditions, prolonged wildfire seasons, and new challenges for water users who have historically operated under free river conditions. While the Bear River, which flows from the Flat Tops to the Town of Yampa, goes under administration annually, the Yampa River downstream of Stagecoach Reservoir only saw its first call on the river in 2018. The same stretch of river went under administration again in both 2020 and 2021.

While drought conditions in 2021 prevented UYWCD from reaching the maximum fill capacity for both Yamcolo and Stagecoach reservoirs, almost 6,900 acre—feet of water was released from Yamcolo Reservoir, primarily for agricultural use and releases from Stagecoach Reservoir assisted flows in the Yampa River through the City of Steamboat Springs during the hot, dry summer months.

UYWCD remains committed to responsibly operating both Yamcolo and Stagecoach reservoirs to maximize their storage potential each year despite drought conditions. We will continue to monitor and improve inflow forecasting and pursue new projects that maximize UYWCD's storage potential long into the future.



In 2021, the inflow at Stagecoach Reservoir fell below 10 cubic feet per second (cfs) before Memorial Day, a time when the historical average inflow is near 100 cfs, leading to an early recreational closure on a stretch of the Yampa River below Stagecoach that remained in effect throughout the summer and well into the fall.

By the end of July 2021, the Yampa River Basin fell under exceptional drought conditions, which significantly impacted local businesses in the agricultural and recreational industries.

# Approval of Ten Year Contract

In 2012, the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District partnered with the Colorado Water Trust (Water Trust) to achieve the very first short-term lease of water to the Colorado Water Conservation Board's (CWCB) Instream Flow Program in the state's history.

Since 2012, the Water Trust has purchased and released 14,500 acre-feet of water into the Yampa River from Stagecoach Reservoir. Water Trust releases help maintain healthy streamflow and water temperature from Stagecoach Reservoir downstream through the City of Steamboat Springs during hot and dry summer months.

Historically, UYWCD and the Water Trust have worked together to negotiate contract terms as needed on an annual basis using state legislation that allowed for environmental water releases to be loaned for instream flow use in 3 out every 10 years.

In 2020, Colorado House Bill 20-1157 was passed, allowing for the establishment of amended rules governing the CWCB Instream Flow and Natural Lake Level Program, previously governed by the 3 in 10 rule.

Effective March 17, 2021, the amended rules provide potential for increased flow rates and expand the temporary loan of water rights for instream flow use from 3 years to 5 years out of every 10 in addition to potential loan renewals for up to three 10-year periods. Renewable loans through the program could allow environmental releases to bolster flows in the Yampa River for up to 15 out of 30 years if needed.

For the past year, UYWCD and the Water Trust have been working towards a longer-term contract that could help support the Yampa River during low flows and utilize the new state legislation. On November 17, 2021, the UYWCD board of directors approved a 10-year contract ensuring that 100 acre-feet of water in the general supply pool of Stagecoach Reservoir will be allocated to the Water Trust each year if supply is available. The contract also allows for the Water Trust to purchase additional water from two other contract pools in Stagecoach Reservoir at various volumes as needed. Payment for water contracted outside of the general supply pool will only be collected if the water is released. With the 10-year contract in place, the recurring challenges of revisiting temporary contracts each year can be minimized without constraining UYWCD water supplies or Water Trust funds.

**UYWCD and the Water Trust will be one of the first in the state to utilize the newly amended statute and rules when they present the 10-year contract as part of their joint application to the CWCB Instream Flow Program in January 2022. Following completion of the CWCB application review process, UYWCD and the Water Trust hope to secure a loan of water rights for instream flow use by spring of 2022, making the first 10-year contract effective through 2032.**



Image: Yampa River

# Financials

## STATEMENT OF NET POSITION FY 2020

ASSETS	
Current Assets:	
Cash and Investments	\$15,807,448
Accounts Receivable	\$23,694
Property Taxes Receivable	\$2,520,875
Certificate of Deposit	\$1,844,392
Prepaid Expenses	\$29,476
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$20,225,885</b>
Noncurrent Assets:	
Capital Assets, Net of Accumulated Depreciation	\$26,209,958
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$46,435,843</b>

LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities:	
Accounts Payable	\$159,440
Accrued Expenses Payable	\$ 9,429
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$168,869</b>

DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES	
<b>Deferred Property Tax Revenues</b>	<b>\$2,520,875</b>

NET POSITION	
Invested in Capital	
Net Investment in Capital Assets	\$26,209,958
Restricted Net Position	\$6,209,728
Capital Projects Development Fund	\$11,326,413
<b>Total Net Position</b>	<b>\$43,746,099</b>

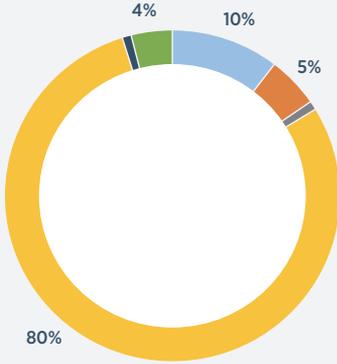
## STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND CHANGE IN NET POSITION FY 2020

OPERATING REVENUES	
Water Sales	\$330,110
Power Income	\$162,432
Other Income	\$11,556
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>\$504,098</b>

OPERATING EXPENSES	
Facilities	
Stagecoach Reservoir	\$578,298
Yamcolo Reservoir	\$146,271
Stillwater Ditch	\$42,083
Administration	\$266,615
Board of Directors	\$125,671
External Affairs	\$106,310
Finance	\$103,206
Legal	\$157,532
Planning	\$53,869
Grants, Scholarships, and Public Information	\$ 144,951
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,724,806</b>
<b>Operating Loss</b>	<b>(\$1,220,708)</b>

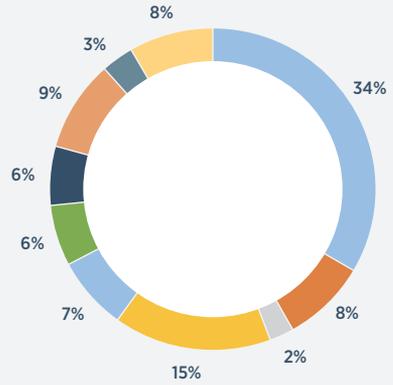
NON-OPERATING REVENUES	
Property Taxes, Net of Collection Fees	\$2,564,147
Gain on Disposal of Assets	\$8,591
Interest Income	\$ 124,735
<b>Net Non-Operating Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 2,697,473</b>
Change in Net Position	\$1,476,765
<b>Net Position, Beginning of Year</b>	<b>\$ 42,269,334</b>
<b>Net Position, End of Year</b>	<b>\$43,746,099</b>

## REVENUE



- Property Taxes, Net of Collection Fees
- Water Sales
- Power Revenues
- Interest Income
- Other Income
- Gain on Disposal of Assets

## EXPENSES



- Stagecoach Reservoir
- Yamcolo Reservoir
- Stillwater Ditch
- Administration
- Board of Directors
- External Affairs
- Planning
- Grants, Scholarships and Public Information
- Gain on Disposal of Assets
- Finance
- Legal

## REVENUE



## EXPENSES





*Image: Stagecoach Reservoir*



**UPPER YAMPA WATER**  
— CONSERVANCY DISTRICT —

[UPPERYAMPAWATER.COM](http://UPPERYAMPAWATER.COM)

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